

SUMMARY

EVALUATION AND POLICY

Eszter Neumann – Júlia Vida: *Knowledge and/or Policy*. The Knowledge and Policy (Know&Pol) international research project investigated the relationship between knowledge and policy within education and health sectors between 2006 and 2011 in 8 EU countries. This article briefly presents the results of the third phase of the research, which examined how the OECD's PISA survey was received in six countries' (French-speaking Belgium, France, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, and Scotland) national education policies. Here, instead of trying to put forward a comparison of the six cases, we have decided to outline each country's "PISA profile" by highlighting specific factors that determined their reception strategy and basis for interpretation. We will also touch upon some of the major conceptual conclusions that the participating teams have drawn from their PISA research. Our objective with this article is to call attention to the rich material gained from a qualitative, sociological analysis of a supra-national instrument of public policy.

Attila Gál: *Finland-brand*. In our study we offer an insight into the brand-building processes being pursued in Finland and examine how we can trace the international reputation of Finland's education system in today's developing "Finland-brand". Our study is based on the internationally accepted nation-branding theories (Simon Anholt, Peter van Ham). We will introduce discourses that connect with the results obtained by Finnish students in PISA measurements on the basis of our former studies. In this beginning stage of our examination, we concentrate on electronic documentation and press 'appearances' of this Finnish nation-branding. It may be stated that besides values connected to the welfare state and highlighting economic successes, the reputation of Finland's education system, which has a prominent place on the international stage, is also an integral part of the development of the "Finland-brand".

Anna Imre: *Regulation and Reality: The Case of Formative Assessment*. This paper looks at experiences had with the introducing of formative assessment into Hungarian education. The paper is based on research that was carried out in 2010 within 22 primary schools, from three different locations, and with the involvement of their heads, teachers, 5th and 8th grade students. The data shows that although the experiences of students were quite positive, the introduction of formative assessment was unable to fully fit in with the objectives of the government, the result being that there was a combination of old and new types of assessment in 50% of the schools. The experiences of the research suggest that the reasons behind this relate to the way of introduction (the legal regulation tool) and a lack of support for – and being able to win over – teachers.

Gábor Halász: *Evaluations of Students' Competencies in Higher Education*. This article analyses the causes and consequences of the rising degree of interest in measuring student competences with standardized tests in higher education. This has long been a policy

priority in school education, though in higher education it is, in most countries, a rather new phenomenon. The article indicates four key reasons: (1) the role of defining learning outcomes in program development as promoted by curriculum research and qualification reforms, (2) the impact of quality improvement and accountability movements, (3) the controversial effect of university rankings, and a desire to counterbalance this, and (4) the changing nexus between higher education and the world of work. The author here presents key development trends, including the underlying models and values and the emerging new standards and dominant approaches. One section is devoted to the most significant international initiative in this area: the AHELO project of the OECD.

Éva Tót: *An Evaluation of Adult Education and the Training Sector*. The article gives a short overview on how the efficiency of adult education and training provision has been evaluated at a systemic level in the last decade. The Hungarian adult education system works mostly as a correction mechanism, that is, compensating for the dysfunctions of school-based education (which had given poor results); yet it is able to provide much less aid as regards adaptation to competition within the international arena. All international surveys dealing with basic competences and on participation in learning activities tell us that the country is lagging behind others. The author's conclusion is that the transparency of the sector is insufficient – and there is no real interest on the part of the stakeholders to thoroughly analyse efficiency.

János Setényi: *Evaluation of the European Social Fund (2000–2006)*. The author here relates, in part, the history of the European Social Fund's (ESA in the period 2000–2006) evaluation process, and also covers, in part, the culture, models and patterns of an international evaluation team. As a contribution to the general aims of the European Commission, ESA mobilized the labour market of Europe – and 8–10 million workers and students moved, mainly from East to West, to seek out new opportunities for work and study. This is one of the biggest social innovations in the history of the European Union, one which was caused by labour market forces (Eastern unemployment, Western levels of income). The author, whilst dealing with further causes of the great migration, additionally mentions the new and rapid developments in communications (ICT, transportation). One great experience noted from the fact of international cooperation in evaluating ESA was the importance of cultural differences among participant evaluators. While the English partner represented professionalism and high-level technical training, Italians brought ideological preparedness to such cooperative work; and while the Spanish partner had great experience in Hispanic evaluations, a small but forceful German team contributed its specifically German cultural background to the international task. The Hungarian team was in an intermediary position amid these different evaluation cultures.